

# Academy Connection



August 2024



Greetings Chef,

Our 52nd Annual American Academy of Chefs Fellow's meeting, induction, and awards dinner was held with great success at the ACF Convention in Phoenix, Arizona.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Executive Chef Lenard Rubin, CEC, CCA, AAC, and his exceptional team for hosting this year's awards dinner. Their showcase of Southwest flavors and innovative presentations was truly outstanding.

It was an honor to introduce our new Fellows, who were formally inducted as members of the American Academy of Chefs. Among them were fifteen Fellows, six Honorary Fellows, three Hall of Fame Fellows, and our 2024 AAC Celebrated Chef, Shirley Shuliang Cheng. Congratulations to all inductees and award recipients for your remarkable contributions to the culinary field. We are deeply grateful to their sponsors for their unwavering support and encouragement in achieving this prestigious recognition among peers and the public.

I want to express my appreciation to all Fellows, members, and volunteers who made this year's AAC Induction and Awards Dinner possible. Your dedication and hard work are invaluable. We could not have achieved this success without the generous support of our sponsors and supporters.

As you know, the AAC relies on your donations and sponsorships to award scholarships and grants to aspiring culinarians and chefs. Your continued financial support is essential for fostering the next generation of culinary talent. This year, we were thrilled to receive a generous \$100,000 scholarship donation from the Hattie Mae & PALS Foundation, thanks to the leadership of Shawn Smith, HAAC, CEO, Chairman, and Founder. In addition to this remarkable gift, we are grateful for the support of all attendees who contributed to our donation appeal.

The Academy is proud to have financially supported the 2024 ACF Youth Culinary Team, who competed at the Culinary Olympics in Stuttgart, Germany. Congratulations on your outstanding achievements! We also sponsored the Knowledgeable Bowl Competition at the 2024 ACF Convention. Congratulations to all participants.

On behalf of the Academy, I would like to thank Vice Chair Chef Reimund Pitz, CEC, CCE, AAC, HOF, regional directors, committee chairs, members, and the Board of Trustees for their invaluable contributions to this year's success.

A special thank you to Karen Stamper, Executive Assistant and Special Project Manager, for her unwavering dedication and support to the Academy and the ACF. Your hard work keeps us all on track.

Respectfully,



*Joe G. Aiello, CEC, AAC, HOF  
Chair, American Academy of Chefs*

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## **Congratulations!!**

We would like to acknowledge all the AAC Fellows who were recognized during the 2024 ACF National Convention.

### **Lifetime Achievement**

Paul C. Jensen, Sr. CEC, AAC  
Ferdinand E. Metz, CMC, AAC, HOF  
James G. Rhoads, CEC, AAC  
Fritz H. Sonnenschmidt, CMC, AAC, HOF

### **Presidential Medallions**

James L. Brown, AAC  
Richard Brumm, CEC, CCA, AAC  
Bruce R. Christensen, CEC, CCA, AAC  
Jim Churches, CEC, CCA, AAC  
James F. Connolly, CEC, CCA, AAC

Keith Gardiner CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC  
Vanessa N. Marquis, CEC, AAC  
Juan M. Martinez, CEC, CCE, AAC  
Maynard Meland, CEC, CCA, AAC  
Roger W. Newell, CEC, CCE, CCA, AAC  
Paula I. Recinella, HAAC  
Thomas P. Ryan, CEC, CCA, HAAC  
Ben Simpkins, CEC, CCA, AAC  
Shawn Smith, HAAC, HBOT  
Mark G. Wright, CEC, AAC, HOF, HBOT

### **Cutting Edge**

Joseph M. Allison, CEC, AAC  
Timothy J. Foley, HAAC  
Gary R. Klinefelter, CEC, CCA, AAC  
Jason E. Knapp, CEC, CCA, AAC  
Alan J. Neace, CEC, AAC  
Robert W. Phillips, CEC, CCA, AAC  
Michael R. Thrash, CEC, CCA, CCE, AAC  
Thomas Yanisko, CEC, CCA, AAC

### **Hermann G. Rusch Award**

Anthony J. Danna, CEC, AAC; Western Region Winner  
Bryan D. Frick, CEC, AAC; Southeast Region Winner  
Denise S. Graffeo, CEC, AAC, HOF; Northeast Region & National Winner

### **Dr. L.J. Minor Chef Professionalism Award**

John Kukucka, CEC, AAC; Central Region Winner  
Lenard R. Rubin, CEC, CCA, AAC; Western Region Winner  
James R. Taylor, CEC, AAC, HOF; Northeast Region & National Winner

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## **2024 American Academy of Chefs Phoenix, Arizona**



Additional photos can be viewed at [acf.chefs's albums](https://www.acfchefs.com/albums) | [Flickr](https://www.flickr.com/photos/acfchefs/)

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## **AAC Officer Nominations 2025 - 2027 Term**

Nominations for AAC Chair and Vice Chair opened at the 2024 AAC Annual Fellows Meeting. Nominations will remain open through December 1, 2024.

Additional information can be found on the [Academy Elections Webpage](#) and future editions of the Academy Connection

Questions can be sent to Karen Stamper, Academy Administrator, at [kstamper@acfcchefs.org](mailto:kstamper@acfcchefs.org) or (904) 484-0202

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Honor Society of the  
American Culinary Federation

## 2025 American Academy of Chefs Applications

*Membership - Connection - Involvement*

The "Prestigious Honor Society" of the American Culinary Federation offers a unique way to honor those who have worked hard and risen through the ranks of the culinary field. A successful application for acceptance as an AAC Fellow will serve as the culmination of years of involvement in the great culinary profession, and as an ACF member.

An Academy Fellow must request an application for a potential inductee. Candidates will need two sponsor letters of recommendation from voting Academy Fellows. An Academy Fellow is permitted to sponsor **one** new applicant per year, as is a Regional Director.

Applications must be **returned by December 1st, 2024**. Induction will be at the 2024 ACF National Convention.

Applications for American Academy of Chefs Induction for 2025 are now available. You can review the current requirements on how to become an American Academy of Chefs Fellow, [Click Here](#)

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## 2025 Hall of Fame

"The Culinary Hall of Fame was unanimously accepted by the Academy members. Its concept is to honor those men and women who, because of their outstanding attributes, have won the respect and love of their professional guild. Therefore, they are so honored by their peers as a positive reflection to all those in this profession who seek achievement!" — *Hermann G. Rusch*

Applications for American Academy of Chefs Induction for 2025 are now available.

To request an application contact Karen Stamper, Academy Administrator, at [kstamper@acfcchefs.org](mailto:kstamper@acfcchefs.org) or (904) 484-0202

Applications must be **returned by December 1st, 2024**. Induction will be at the 2024 ACF National Convention.

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## We would love to hear from you!

We would like to hear what great things our Academy Fellows are doing. Email Karen Stamper, Executive Assistant and Special Projects Manager at [kstamper@acfchefs.org](mailto:kstamper@acfchefs.org) with events, pictures and acknowledgements about AAC Fellows and we will post in the monthly Academy Connection.

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## Tax-Deductible Donations

(May 1, 2024 - July 31, 2024):

ACF Caxambas Chapter of Southwest Florida  
ACF Chefs de Cuisine Association of California Los Angeles  
ACF Chicago Chefs  
ACF Columbus Chapter  
ACF Epicurean Club of Boston  
ACF Greater Baltimore Chapter  
ACF Palm Beach County Chefs Association  
ACF Tampa Bay Culinary Association, Inc.  
Ventura Chefs Association  
Joe G. Aiello, CEC, AAC, HOF  
Earl R. Arrowood, Jr. CCC, CCE, AAC, HOF  
Jacqueline Bamrick, CEC, AAC  
Deborah A. Bando-Duit, CEC, AAC  
Leslie L. Bartosh, CEC, AAC  
Christopher Blanchard, CEC, CCA, HAAC  
David E. Brough, CEC CCE CCA AAC  
Charles C. Chang, CEC, AAC  
Americo S. DiFronzo, CEC, CCA, AAC, HBOT  
Ralph Carl Feraco, CEC, AAC  
Richard L. Fererico  
Winslow R. Goodier, CEC, AAC  
Joachim W Green, AAC  
Francine Greff, HAAC  
Kirk Kief, CEC, CCA, CPC, AAC  
John A. Minniti, CCE, AAC, HOF  
Reimund D. Pitz, CEC, CCE, AAC, HOF  
Douglas J. Polmann, CEC, AAC  
Addiemae Rolle-Farrington, CEC, CWPC, CCE, HAAC  
Alan L. Romano, CEC, CCE, AAC  
Michael D. Tadlock  
Clyde R. Tanner, CEC, CCE, AAC  
Lisa D. Tomecek, CEPC, AAC

[Donate Now](#)

Donations, as many as you choose to make in any given year, are welcome at any time. On behalf of the entire Academy family, we thank you again for your generous support.

Donations may be made by check mailed directly to the Academy Office, online, or via credit card. Please contact the Academy Administrator at [academy@acfchefs.org](mailto:academy@acfchefs.org) if you have any questions.

**THANK YOU to all of our 2024 Donors!**

## 2024 AAC Sponsors

We would like to thank our sponsors for their continued support of the American Academy of Chefs and their mission.





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# Turkish Tastes

Through the Academy Connection e-newsletter, the American Academy of Chefs provides members with news and information on products and services offered by the AAC®, its partners and American Culinary Federation.

If you do not wish to receive the e-newsletter, please [SafeUnsubscribe](#).



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The Standard of Excellence for Chefs

STAY CONNECTED



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